

A STUDY ON EMPLOYEE STRESS IN MALAYSIAN CLINICAL LABORATORIES

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ABSTRACT

In modern life stress is a common problem. The negative effects of stress affect individuals' health and performance. As a result, individuals have their own stress perceptions and they develop different kinds of strategies in order to manage stressful situations. A study of how stressful job events and task interest are associated with quality of work life was conducted through interviews and questionnaire assessment of 37 members of the laboratories staff at Malaysian hospitals. Factors analyses of the nature of stress revealed five separable factors; one that accounted for the community, family problem, financial problem, health problem, and that identified level of satisfaction with the work context is work allocation. As predicted by a five-factor model, the number of stressful work events correlated with dissatisfactions with the work context but not with satisfaction with the work itself. Level of task interest was associated with higher ratings of satisfaction with the work itself and was uncorrelated with level of work context satisfaction.

Keywords: Employee stress, Health sector, Malaysian Clinical Laboratories.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPICS	PAGES
ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background of Study	1-3
1.2 History of Clinical Laboratory	3-4
1.3 Problem Statements	4-6
1.4 Research Questions	7
1.5 Research Objectives	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	8
1.7 Scope of Research	9
1.8 Limitation of Study	10-12
1.9 Hypotheses	13-14
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Introduction	15
2.2 Definition of Stress	16
2.3 Types of Stress	17-18

2.4	Level of Stress	19-21
2.5	Nature of Stress	21-23
2.6	Factors Effecting Level of Stress	
2.6.1	Community	23-27
2.6.2	Family	28-34
2.6.3	Financial	35-39
2.6.4	Health	40-43
2.6.5	Working Allocation	44-50
2.7	Concept of Stress Management	51-54
2.7.1	Individual Stress Management	55-57
2.7.2	Organization Stress Management	58-60
2.8	Conceptual Frameworks	61
2.9	Conclusion	62

CHAPTER 3 : METHODOLOGY

3.1	Introduction	63
3.2	Research Methodology	
3.2.1	Research Design	
3.2.2	Research Methods	63
3.2.3	Sampling for Study Survey	64
3.2.4	The Target Group	64
3.2.5	Questionnaire Design	64

	3.2.6 Delivery and Collection of the Questionnaire	66
	3.2.7 Data Analysis Method	66
3.3	Conclusion	66
CHAPTER 4 :	FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS	
4.1	Introduction	67
4.2	Respondents Profile	68-76
4.3	General View on Stress	77-78
4.4	The Nature of Stress	79-103
4.5	Findings on Suggestions To Reduce Stress	104-108
CHAPTER 5 :	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	
5.1	Introduction	109
5.2	Summary of Findings	109-112
5.3	Implications to Clinical Laboratory Managers	113
5.4	Implications to Future Researchers	114
REFERENCES		115

LIST TABLES

TABLES	DESCRIPTIONS	PAGE
Table 4.1	Analysis on Gender	70
Table 4.2	Analysis on Age	71
Table 4.3	Analysis on Race	72
Table 4.4	Analysis on Marital Status	73
Table 4.5	Academics Qualification	75
Table 4.6	Analysis on Income Group	76
Table 4.7	Analysis on Year of Working	77
Table 4.8	Analysis on Prefer Working	78
Table 4.9	Analysis on Experience With Stress Involving Workplace	79
Table 4.10	Analysis on The Most Important Factor Affect Stress	80
Table 4.11	Analysis on Took Out A Mortgage On A House	81
Table 4.12	Analysis on Take Loan	82
Table 4.13	Analysis on Standard of Living	83
Table 4.14	Analysis on Income Went Up	84
Table 4.15	Analysis on Income Went Down	85
Table 4.16	Analysis on Spouse had Child	86
Table 4.17	Analysis on Left the Nest	87
Table 4.18	Analysis on Family Member Ill	88
Table 4.19	Analysis on Divorced	89
Table 4.20	Analysis on Family Get Together	90

Table 4.21	Analysis on Sexual Problem	91
Table 4.22	Analysis on Eating Habits	92
Table 4.23	Analysis on Seriously Injured	93
Table 4.24	Analysis on Very Ill	94
Table 4.25	Analysis on Sleeping Habits	95
Table 4.26	Analysis on Close Friend Died	96
Table 4.27	Analysis on In-Law Problems	97
Table 4.28	Analysis on Recreational Activity	98
Table 4.29	Analysis on Traffic Ticket	99
Table 4.30	Analysis on Went Out Socially	100
Table 4.31	Analysis on Major Changes In Working Hours	101
Table 4.32	Analysis on Change Line of Work	102
Table 4.33	Analysis on Change Work Responsibility	103
Table 4.34	Analysis on Problems With Boss	104
Table 4.35	Analysis on Personal Achievement	105

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Staffing issues should be central to anyone interested in developing high-quality services for people with intellectual disabilities (Emerson, Remington, Hatton, & Hastings, 1995; Reid, Parsons, & Green, 1989; Rice & Rosen, 1991). Staff provides the interface through which national, regional, and organizational philosophies and policies are translated into practical action directly affecting the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. As staff constitute the largest slice of revenue expenditure in a service, increasing the quality of staff performance is crucial if scarce resources are to optimally benefit people with intellectual disabilities.

In recent years, an increasing amount of research has focused on the issue of staff stress in services for people with intellectual disabilities (see Hatton, in press; Rose, 1995, for reviews). As in organizational psychology generally (Arnold, Robertson, & Cooper, 1991; Cooper & Payne, 1988), high staff stress has been implicated in both poor staff performance (Rose, Mullan, & Fletcher, 1994) and other staff behaviors with negative consequences for services, such as staff absenteeism and turnover (Hatton & Emerson, 1993b; Rose, 1995). It is also clear that high staff stress is widespread in services for people with intellectual disabilities. Recent UK surveys of staff in services for people with intellectual disabilities have found that one third of staff report high

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